

SHEPTON MALLET
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Including the Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector



For the Year Ending 31st December, 1950

Shepton Mallet Rural District Council

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS :

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (PART-TIME) :

DR. T. E. COULSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.

HEALTH VISITORS :

MISS C. J. WOOD, CANNARD'S GRAVE, SHEPTON MALLET.

MISS I. M. ABBOTT, HIGH STREET, GLASTONBURY.

SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR :

A. E. T. NETTING, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., CERT., R.S.I. & S.I.E.J. BOARD,
CERT. MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

ADDITIONAL SANITARY INSPECTOR :

F. C. POWELL, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., CERT. R.S.I & S.I.E.J. BOARD
CERT. MEAT & OTHER FOODS.

CLERICAL ASSISTANT :

MISS M. E. BROWN.

3.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospitals.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	6	6	0
Diphtheria	1	0	0
Measles	53	0	0
Whooping Cough	22	0	0
Pneumonia	1	0	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	2	2	0
Tuberculosis :—			
(a) Respiratory	5	0	4
(b) Non-Respiratory	0	0	0
	<hr/> 90 <hr/>	<hr/> 8 <hr/>	<hr/> 5 <hr/>

The Notification of Infectious Diseases in the District by Medical Practitioners was satisfactory.

4.—OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

No Cases Notified.

5.—CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

Measles was somewhat less in evidence throughout the District ^{except} in October, November and December. The type of the disease was not so mild as usual, but there were no deaths.

Pneumonia caused 1 death.

6.—SUMMARY OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT.

A.—PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME :—

- (1) General :—There are 9 nurses in the District engaged in general district work, who are affiliated to the County Nursing Association, and between them they cover the whole District.
- (2) For Infectious Diseases :—Some of the cases of Infectious Disease were removed to Isolation Hospitals, the remainder were either nursed by their relatives or by nurses obtained from Nursing Homes or Hospitals outside the District.

B.—MIDWIVES.

There are 9 Certified Midwives practising in the District.

C.—CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

None in the District.

D.—HOSPITALS SITUATED IN THE DISTRICT.

None.

E.—INSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR UNMARRIED MOTHERS, ILLEGITIMATE INFANTS AND HOMELESS CHILDREN.

None.

F.—AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

- (1) For Infectious Cases.—None.
- (2) For Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents.—The Motor Ambulance provided by the County Council, and kept at The Wells Road Garage (Tel. 126), is used when necessary.

G.—SCABIES.

No cases of Scabies have been brought to my notice.

7.—LABORATORY WORK.

Examinations of bacteriological and pathological specimens are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory at Taunton and considerable use of this Laboratory has been made during the year.

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept by Messrs. Boots (Chemists) and Miss Watkins (Chemist) at Shepton Mallet, and can be obtained by Practitioners on the National Health Service Prescription Form.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1.—WATER.

(a) ACTION TAKEN, ETC.

The year being a very wet one, the seasonal contamination of the small untreated supplies was more troublesome than usual and owing to the particular geological formation of the gathering ground it was not possible to do much to eliminate it.

The greater part of the faecal contamination of these supplies comes from cows which cannot be excluded from the gathering ground and the chance of persistent human pollution is not greater now than it has been throughout the time the supplies have been in use, which is about fifty years.

(b) WATER SUPPLIES FROM PUBLIC MAIN.

The Public supply has been laid on to 37 new Council houses occupied during the year and also to 5 new private enterprise houses : total—42.

2 Private enterprise houses completed during the year have supplies from private systems.

In four cases standpipe supplies have been laid on, making 4 additional laid-on supplies to existing houses and 4 less with standpipes.

(c) PARTICULARS OF ANY EXTENSIONS OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES.

An extension of the public supply to the new housing site at Batcombe, where four houses are in course of erection was commenced during the year and almost completed. This was by laying 685 yards (approx.) of 3in. spun iron water main.

(d) FUTURE PROPOSALS.

Some progress has been made with the preparation of the major water supply scheme for the district at Ashwick Grove and St. Dunstan's Well, and the Council's Consulting Engineers are hoping to be in a position to go to tender early in 1951. Much of the materials including pipes has been ordered but the final estimated cost has not yet been agreed ; neither has the Ministry announced the amount of grant to be made.

Detailed results of the bacteriological examinations carried out during the year are as follows :—

(a) PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES.

1. CHLORINATED SUPPLIES.

Number of Samples taken	....	....	....	....	58
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	55
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	3
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	—

2. UNTREATED SUPPLIES.

Number of samples taken	....	....	....	....	35
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	13
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	6
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	16

(b) PRIVATE PIPED WATER SUPPLIES USED BY PUBLIC (UNTREATED).

Number of samples taken	....	....	....	....	16
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	5
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	2
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	9

(c) OTHER PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES (INDIVIDUAL PREMISES, FARMS, ETC.).

Number of samples taken	....	....	....	....	16
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	3
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	3
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	10

No Chemical Analyses were taken.

There is no liability to plumbo-solvent action from any of the water supplies.

Appropriate action was taken in all cases of unsatisfactory results, except those in connection with the Council's own supplies, none of which were consistently unsatisfactory.

Available figures in relation to the supply of water in the various parishes are :—

Parish.	No. of houses.	No. having piped water supply into or on to the houses.	No. of houses supplied by stand-pipe.	No. supplied by well or other supplies
Ashwick	314	243	50	21
Batcombe	132	59	31	42
Binegar	89	66	21	2
W. Bradley	86	68	12	6
Cranmore	119	61	36	22
Croscombe	176	60	95	21
Ditchheat	194	167	23	4
Doulting	162	113	27	22
Downhead	33	4	13	16
Emborough	50	37	11	2
Evercreech	422	356	46	20
Holcombe	189	170	19	—
Lamyatt	47	31	1	15
Lydford	120	9	12	99
Milton Clevedon	35	18	14	3
East Pennard	129	59	15	55
Pilton	237	189	24	24
Pylle	51	12	5	34
Stoke Lane	220	172	37	11
Stratton-on-the-Fosse	442	372	59	11
	<hr/> 3247 <hr/>	<hr/> 2266 <hr/>	<hr/> 551 <hr/>	<hr/> 430 <hr/>

2.—DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

No extension of sewers or other improvements were carried out during the year except in connection with the Council's own housing schemes.

(a) LIST OF PARISHES WITH MAIN DRAINAGE AND EFFICIENT DISPOSAL SYSTEMS :

Evercreech,
Doulting,
Ashwick—Oakhill Village.

(b) FUTURE PROPOSALS.

As reported previously, little further progress has been made except work on the preparation of some of the schemes by the Council's Engineers :—

i. STOKE LANE.

Necessary to deal with potential sources of pollution of the proposed new water supply sources. The extent of this system is not yet settled, but the latest figure is £50,000, which includes also sewerage a small portion of the parish of Ashwick under the same scheme.

ii. STRATTON-ON-THE-FOSSE.

The need here is urgent because of the necessity for more houses in the village and the inadequacy of the present system.

iii. EVERCREECH.

Owing to building developments in the village (houses and milk factory premises) the need for considerable improvement in the sewerage system and sewage disposal works has been appreciated by the Council and the Consulting Engineers have been instructed to prepare a scheme to deal with the problem.

iv. GURNEY SLADE.

v. CROSCOMBE.

} These villages are considered next in priority but little progress has been made during the year.

3.—HOUSE REFUSE COLLECTION.

The Council's Karrier CK 3 lorry, with a crew of driver and two loaders, continued to give satisfactory service. This is the fourth year that the whole district has been served and household refuse has been removed by direct labour. During the year the lorry has travelled 11,237 miles, collecting approximately 1,689 tons of rubbish and 69 tons of soil as covering material.

Chelynch tip ceased to be of use during the year, and, as circumstances permit, this tip will be finally covered with soil.

A site for another tip in the south part of the district was being sought, and by the end of the year there were prospects of obtaining one at Evercreech Junction.

The two big problems with tip control were the obtaining of suitable material (soil, fine ash, etc.) for covering—especially during summer months when very few fires were used—and finding sufficient time for the men to work on the tip layering and levelling it off. Every effort, however, was made to secure the best results.

The same schedule of collection operated as for last year.

4.—SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following report has been furnished to me by the Senior Sanitary Inspector, under Article 27 of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935 :—

The inspectors' time during the year was taken up, for the most part, by visits in connection with meat and food inspection, investigation of complaints and subsequent action, application for council houses and building licensing control. That it was necessary to increase visits in this latter connection to the extent of almost 100 per cent., in order to allocate fairly the monetary ceiling, is indicative both of the poor condition to which housing property has deteriorated and the desire of some owners to remedy the state of affairs. Building Licensing, necessary though it may be in the National interest, has proved a serious obstruction to the efficient maintenance of house property. Unless more facilities are given to enable repairs to be undertaken on a greater scale, more and more houses must further deteriorate to such an extent that additional burden must fall on the district in the replacement of old worn out property with new.

Under the heading of meat inspection it will be seen that once more a large number of animals were received at Pylle for slaughter for human consumption. Although the total figures have remained more or less the same, the average number of cattle dealt with over the last few years has steadily increased. It is pleasing to note that, although the preponderance of weight of meat and offals condemned relates to cattle the increase in numbers slaughtered has not caused a corresponding increase in meat condemned. In fact, the percentage of animals found to be affected with disease during the year showed a marked reduction. Cases of *Cysticercus Bovis* continued to appear in Cattle during the year. Each one of these was notified to the Inspector of the District or of the County from whence the animal came and enquiries were pursued to try and trace the human being who was affected with the tape worm causing this condition. As a long period may elapse between the voiding of eggs from the human being and the finding of the cyst in the slaughtered animal, it will be realized that it was very difficult to trace the condition back to its human source.

It was not found necessary to serve any Statutory Notices under the Public Health Act, during the year.

(a) VISITS.

The following visits were made during the year :—

Dwellinghouses ....	....	....	....	....	634
Housing Act—Overcrowding	....	....	....	....	4
Infectious Disease	....	....	....	....	16
Factories	....	....	....	....	10
Bakehouses	....	....	....	....	5
Cowsheds, Dairies, Milkshops	....	....	....	....	20
Food Premises	....	....	....	....	70
Ice-Cream Premises	....	....	....	....	23
Meat Inspection and Slaughterhouse	....	....	....	....	431
Council Houses	....	....	....	....	319
Rats and Mice Suppression	....	....	....	....	1269
Refuse Collection	....	....	....	....	59
Refuse Disposal	....	....	....	....	24
Drainage	....	....	....	....	16
Water Supplies	....	....	....	....	32
Verminous Premises	....	....	....	....	5
Control of Civil Building	....	....	....	....	55
Miscellaneous	....	....	....	....	219
Camping sites and Moveable Dwellings	....	....	....	....	17
Outworkers	....	....	....	....	2

(b) NOTICES.

	Informal.	Statutory.
Served	94	0
Complied with	80	6
Outstanding	51	0

(c) LIST OF WORKS EXECUTED AS A RESULT OF NOTICES.

INTERNAL WORK.

ROOMS.

Damp remedied	....	....	....	9
Stripped, cleansed and re-decorated	....	....	....	22
Plaster repaired	....	....	....	21
Floors repaired	....	....	....	18
Windows repaired	....	....	....	20
Stoves repaired or renewed	....	....	....	2
Doors, locks, etc.	....	....	....	4
Ventilated Foodstore provided	....	....	....	2

STAIRCASES.

Repairs	....	....	....	....	....	1
Stripped or redecorated	....	....	....	....	....	2

SANITARY FITMENTS.

New sinks	....	....	....	....	....	4
New pedestals	....	....	....	....	....	3
Privies abolished	....	....	....	....	....	3
Pails abolished	....	....	....	....	....	1
W.C.'s provided	....	....	....	....	....	5
Pail closets provided	....	....	....	....	....	1
W.C.'s repaired	....	....	....	....	....	4
Waste waterpipes repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	3

DRAINS.

Unstopped or repaired	....	....	....	....	....	13
New drains	....	....	....	....	....	4
Gullies repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	6
Ditches cleansed	....	....	....	....	....	1
Inspection Chambers provided or repaired	....	....	....	....	....	2

WATER SUPPLIES AND FITTINGS.

New services	....	....	....	....	....	4
Repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	6

EXTERNAL WORKS.

Roofs repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	16
Gutters and R.W. pipes repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	3
Walls repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	7
Dustbins provided	....	....	....	....	....	59
Accumulations removed	....	....	....	....	....	7

SHOPS.

Heating provided	....	....	....	....	....	1
Light or ventilation provided	....	....	....	....	....	3
Washing facilities provided	....	....	....	....	....	2
Sundry General Defects remedied	....	....	....	....	....	3

(d) SMOKE ABATEMENT. (DUST).

No nuisance from smoke was reported during the year, but an old cause for complaint, viz. :—stone dust nuisance from one of the stone quarry works, continued to give trouble. The position has been watched and the firm responsible has continued to seek a betterment of conditions by improving their installations.

(e) CAMPING SITES.

There are no licensed camping sites in the district.

(f) RAG FLOCK ACTS, 1911 AND 1928.

There are no premises in the district in which rag flock is manufactured, used or sold.

(g) RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION.

The Council's part-time Rodent operator continued to deal with infested premises during the year. These infestations were largely brought to light during the continuance of the survey commenced in 1948. Very few complaints having been received.

(h) INSECT PEST.

Very few cases of infestation have been reported, one case of flea infestation only having been dealt with.

FACTORIES. (Factories Acts, 1937 & 1948).

PART I.

1.—Inspection for purpose of provisions as to health.

Premises. (i).	Number on Register. (ii).	Inspections. (iii).	Written Notices. (iv).	Occupiers Prosecuted. (v).
i. Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	15	—	—	—
ii. Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies :— (a) Subject to the local Authorities (trans- fer of Enforcement) Order, 1938. (b) Others.	51	10	1	—
iii. Other premises under the Act (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	66	10	1	—

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars.	Number of cases in which defects were found.				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of cleanliness (S1)					
Overcrowding (S2)					
Unreasonable temperature (S3)					
Inadequate Ventilation (S4)					
Ineffective drainage of floors (S6)	1	1	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S7)					
(a) Insufficient					
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	2	—	1	—
(c) Not separate for sexes					
Other offences (not including of- fences relating to Homework)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	3	3	—	1	—

PART VIII. OF THE ACT.

3.—OUTWORKERS.

There were 48 outworkers in the district, all employed in the gloving industry by firms outside the district.

HOUSING.

1.—ACTION UNDER HOUSING ACT, 1936.

Owing to the continued restriction on the use of building labour and material it was not possible to undertake action under Section 9 for the extensive repair and/or re-conditioning of house property.

The acute housing shortage prevented formal action under Section 11, for the securing of demolition or closure of worn-out property, in all but the most acute cases. Three cases were dealt with and demolition orders made in respect of two. An undertaking was accepted in respect of the remaining one. In a fourth instance initial notices were served but the property changed hands and the new owner voluntarily demolished it. In three cases the families were re-housed by the Council.

Progress with the Rural Housing Survey was limited to cursory visits with other work.

2.—OVERCROWDING.

Four new cases of overcrowding were reported during the year, and two existing cases were abated, one by the Council housing the tenant.

3.—HOUSING ACT, 1949, : IMPROVEMENT GRANT.

Two applications covering three dwellings and three other enquiries were received during the year. In the case of the enquiries, no action was taken by the owners owing to the high cost of repairs involved. Of the applications received, one was refused and the other in respect of two dwellings was still subject of discussion at the close of the year.

4.—HOUSING PROGRAMME.

Thirty-three Council Houses were completed and occupied during the year, an increase of 4 on the previous year's figure of 29.

The number of applicants on the waiting list on December 31st was 326, an increase of 41 over the year before, in spite of the completed new houses.

Total number of applications for Council Houses at the close of the year. (In rooms 75)	326
Number of houses erected by the Local Authority during the year	33
Number of houses in course of erection by Private Enterprise	5
Number of Houses erected by Private Enterprise during the year	10
Number of houses in course of erection by Local Authority	40
Number of unfit houses licensed for habitation	27
Number of houses continuing to be requisitioned by the Council	21
Number of houses previously condemned but still occupied	9

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

1.—MILK SUPPLY.

Number of Producer-retailers registered	63
Number of Retailers (not producers)	5
Heat Treatment Plants	1

DESIGNATED MILK.

Number of Retailers T.T. Milk	4
Number of Retailers Pasteurised Milk	Nil.

2.—ICE-CREAM.

No. of premises registered for :—

(a) Manufacture	Nil.
(b) Sale	19

Samples were regularly taken from the various retailers, most of whom were selling pre-packed ice-cream from well-known manufacturers.

3.—MEAT AND OTHER FOODS. (INSPECTIONS AND CONDEMNATIONS).

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed	1045	1234	4858	4014	380
Number inspected	1045	1234	4858	4014	380
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS.					
Whole carcasses condemned	35		35	25	33
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	460		8	362	72
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	21.7		0.89	9.64	27.63
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY.					
Whole carcasses condemned	36		14	—	6
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	341		5	—	47
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	16.54		0.39	—	13.95

Total Weight of Diseased/Unsound food condemned : 45 tons 16 cwt. 85 lbs.

OTHER FOODS SURRENDERED.

1 x 7 oz. Can Luncheon Meat .	Perforated Can.
3 x 4 lb. Cans Pork Luncheon Meat.	Blown Condition.
3 x 12 oz. Tins "Olida," Luncheon Meat.	" "
1 x 6 lb. Tin Beefeater Corned Beef.	" "
17 lbs. Hindquarter Beef.	" "
16 lbs. Fore-end of Bacon.	" "
1 x 12 oz. Can Luncheon Meat.	" "
1 x 20 oz. Can Meat and Gravy.	" "

25 lbs. Loin Mutton.
 1 12 oz. Can Corned Beef.
 3 x 6 lb. Cans Corned Beef.
 1 x A1 Tin Heinz Baked Beans.
 1 x 10½ oz. Tin Batchelors Peas.
 14 lbs. New Zealand White Cheese.
 4 Stone—Cod Fillets.

Bone taint.
 Liquefaction and souring of contents.
 " " " "
 Blown, decomposition.
 " "
 Fustiness and mould.
 Tainted condition and early decomposition.

4.—SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

Number of Registered Slaughterhouses	....	....	....	Nil
Number of Licensed Slaughterhouses	....	....	....	2
Number of Slaughterhouses in use under Ministry of Food			....	1
Licensed Knackers Yard ....	....	....	....	Nil

The Slaughterhouse in use under the Ministry of Food is still unsatisfactory in several respects.

5.—SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933.

A register of all licensed slaughtermen pursuant to Section 3 (1) of the above Act, is kept, and the number so licensed is 11.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman, Lady Sheelah and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. E. COULSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

